

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 133
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1.5
Programme: Environment Assessment and Compliance Division (EACD)
Topic: EACD - Total funding and FTE - assessments, approvals and monitoring
Hansard Page:
Question Date:
Question Type: Written

Senator Waters asked:

Senator WATERS: If you could provide a list of the total funding and the full-time equivalents allocated to the relevant departmental section responsible for assessments, approvals and compliance monitoring under the EPBC Act—obviously the names will have changed—again, since 2008-09. Thank you.

Answer:

The table below provides an overview of FTE and expenses incurred for the Environmental Assessment and Compliance Division (EACD) since 2011/12, noting this division was first incepted on 23 June 2011.

EACD typically manages a range of business processes associated with the administration of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)* (EPBC Act) and the *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981*. The figures in Table 1 below are inclusive of the full range of work of the Division, including:

- Strategic assessments, regional sustainability planning, environment assessment and approvals, sea dumping (permits)
- Compliance audits, compliance incident assessment and follow up actions, seizures, investigations of the EPBC Act and other legislation administered by the department
- Assisting the department with regulatory compliance activities for all legislation administered by the department.
- Regulatory reform activities under the EPBC Act (in late 2013 a Regulatory Reform Taskforce was established in EACD to focus on implementing the Government's agenda to deliver a One Stop Shop for approval bilateral agreements with willing the States and Territories)

Prior to 2011/12 the functions of assessments, approvals and compliance monitoring under the EPBC Act were dispersed differently across the Department. Extracting staffing/funding data under these previous organisational structures is complex and would require substantial resources, which were unavailable at the time of preparing this response.

Table 1: EACD FTE and budget, by Fiscal Year

		Expenses[^]	FTE	
2011/12	Environmental Assessment and Compliance Division	30,077,264.70	185.6	
2012/13	Environmental Assessment and Compliance Division	33,242,537.82	170.3	
2013/14 ^{^^}	Environmental Assessment and Compliance Division	30,647,799.87	191.7	

[^] Whole of Division costs - the Division has the primary responsibility for regulatory implementation of the EBPC Act

^{^^}In 2013-14, it was announced that EACD would establish a special Taskforce to deliver the 'One Stop Shop' election commitment.